

Guidelines For Safe Havens In Vermont

Vermont's Baby Safe Haven Law offers parents safe places they can relinquish their babies—anonymous-ly and legally. They can do so without fear of being arrested or criminally charged, as long as the babies have not been abused or neglected.

To be covered by the law, a person (it does not have to be a parent) must *hand* the baby, up to 30 days old, to an employee or volunteer of a Safe Haven. THE BABY CANNOT BE LEFT ALONE.

A Safe Haven is any fire or police station; health care facility; place of worship; adoption agency licensed in Vermont; or place an emergency responder, contacted through 911, agrees to meet the person to receive a baby.

If you are an employee or volunteer working in a designated Safe Haven, it's important to know that:

- 1) You may receive a baby at any time; and
- 2) You are immune from civil or criminal liability for actions taken to fulfill your duties under this law.

If you are presented with a Safe Haven baby, the following guidelines will help you carry out your responsibilities under this law.

Protocol

- ☐ Take physical custody of the baby. Briefly examine the baby to make sure he/she is not in immediate danger. If the baby appears to be in immediate danger, call 911.
- ☐ Offer the person the Safe Haven brochure published by the Agency of Human Services.
- ☐ Advise the person that while she/he is not required to reveal any identifying information, she/he may provide information about the child's medical history using the voluntary medical form that is attached to the Safe Haven brochure. Encourage the person to complete the form and leave it with you. If the form is left with you, please complete the information at the bottom of the form with the date you received the baby and your location.
- ☐ Document any additional information about the child, the birthparents, and/or the situation that is offered voluntarily, including any names the person is willing to provide.
- ☐ Call 911. Advise the dispatcher that you have physical custody of a baby abandoned under the Baby Safe Haven law. Ask the dispatcher to send an ambulance to transport the baby to the nearest hospital and a police officer to take legal custody of the baby. Provide any forms and information collected to the officer who takes custody of the infant. Keep a copy for your records.
- ☐ Immediately call your local DCF, Family Services District Office to report what has happened.
- ☐ If the baby is left after normal business hours, on a weekend, or on a state holiday, call Family Services' Emergency Services Program at 1-800-649-5285 to make a report.

Note: If the person comes back to request the return of the baby and the baby is still there, *do not* give the baby back. Instead, instruct the person to contact the local Family Services District Office of DCF.

Family Services District Offices

Weekdays from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

BARRE - 479-4260

255 North Main Street, Suite 7, Barre, VT 05641-4189

BENNINGTON - 442-8138

200 Veterans Memorial Drive, Suite 14, Bennington, VT 05201-1956

BRATTLEBORO- 257-2888

232 Main Street, 2nd Floor, Brattleboro, VT 05301-2879

BURLINGTON - 863-7370

1193 North Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401-2749

HARTFORD - 295-8840

226 Holiday Drive, Suite 32, White River Junction, VT 05001-2024

MIDDLEBURY - 388-4660

700 Exchange Street, Suite 105, Middlebury, VT 05753-1529

MORRISVILLE - 888-4576

63 Professional Drive, Suite 3, Morrisville, VT 05661-8522

NEWPORT - 334-6723

100 Main Street, Suite 230, Newport, VT 05855-4898

RUTLAND - 786-5817

220 Asa Bloomer Bldg, 88 Merchants Row, Rutland, VT 05701-3449

ST. ALBANS - 527-7741

20 Houghton Street, Suite 211, St. Albans, VT 05478-2247

ST. JOHNSBURY - 748-8374

67 Eastern Avenue, Suite 4, St. Johnsbury, VT 05819-5603

SPRINGFIELD - 885-8900

100 Mineral Street, Suite 101, Springfield, VT 05156-3166

After-hours, on weekends, and on state holidays:

call 1-800-649-5285

babysafehaven.vermont.gov